Edpuzzle is a must-use educational tool that every language educator should seriously consider integrating into his or her daily classroom routine. It leverages students’ pre-existing desire to engage with visual media and pairs it with easy-to-use features to help teachers enhance their pedagogy while simultaneously collecting formative and summative data.

Edpuzzle (edpuzzle.com) was originally conceived as a tool to help teachers implement the flipped-classroom model. The concept was based on the notion that students could go home, watch a curated video that would present new but often relatively digestible content, take some targeted notes on it, and thus arrive in class the next day with a baseline understanding. Having completed this pre-work would catalyze the potential to delve further and deeper into content than ever before. This would not only help teachers save time teaching basic concepts, but it would also take advantage of these existing educational resources, in addition to allowing students the opportunity to learn at their own pace since Edpuzzle allows them to pause, rewind, and even re-watch videos while taking notes.

It is an absolutely fabulous way to facilitate language acquisition. In my classroom we still review the material, but I have found that we are often reinforcing concepts that students have already learned rather than having to consider them for the first time. Edpuzzle reduces students’ cognitive load when learning new grammatical concepts and structures, allowing them to spend more time engaging and utilizing language in authentic contexts in class—and this is where genuine language learning happens.

Accountability

One of the biggest challenges that teachers confront when assigning videos for the purpose of learning content is the tempting nature of the internet for students. The flipped-classroom model will collapse if teachers have no way to genuinely and regularly ensure that students are actually engaging with these videos at home. Since basic notes are often the only product students are tasked with producing to demonstrate their engagement, the pitfalls are obvious.

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First, Edpuzzle utilizes a feature that allows teachers to decide whether or not to permit students to scrub through videos. If a teacher elects to disallow students from scrubbing—which I highly recommend—there are a number of advantages:

- Most importantly, students cannot elect to skip through a video. This means that students must watch the video whether it is one minute long or 10 minutes long.
- Students may not surf the internet while the video plays on another tab, either. Edpuzzle prevents this by:
  - Disabling the video if the student is not on the Edpuzzle screen. This means that a student cannot watch or do anything else unless they are on the site. This feature is automatic if you disallow scrubbing.
  - Allowing teachers to see exactly how much of a video a student has watched, in real time. This screen makes it possible to hold students accountable, even if they claim to have watched the entire video.
- However, Edpuzzle goes one important step farther. It gives teachers the ability to integrate three types of questions for students to answer while they are watching these videos. This not only holds students accountable, but it also enhances learning.

The three different types of questions that you can embed in a video are: multiple-choice, open-ended, and comments. You can integrate as many questions as you desire, make them as difficult as you desire, and receive the results from the questions as soon as students respond to them.
As educators, we understand that simply because a student seems engaged and is actively participating does not necessarily mean that he or she is grasping the content to the extent that we wish. Moreover, if we cannot assume this of the overtly engaged student, we can assume it to an even lesser degree of those who are more reserved or unwilling to participate. Instead, we rely on formative and summative data to inform our practices. These embedded questions are a type of formative assessment which tell us the number of students who need additional explanation as well as the extent to which we need to re-explain.

However, collecting and analyzing the data for these assessments is time consuming, especially if you teach several preps a day. Edpuzzle offers several tools that address this:

• As students are completing their work, you can decide exactly where and what type of question to ask. For example, if students are learning about descriptive adjectives, you can create a multiple-choice question about the placement of these adjectives in a sentence. If students are watching an informative video about how narcotrafficking impacts certain regions of Latin America, you can embed an open-ended question asking them to restate the definitions of key terms to check for understanding. Or, if you simply want them to reflect on a concept or idea, embed a comment section at the end of the video and give them an opportunity to expound.

• You can then review these answers and begin a discussion based on comments or ask a student to share a particularly thoughtful comment that will move the conversation in a fruitful direction.

• By giving teachers access to all student responses, Edpuzzle even prevents students from giving random answers or typing a single letter simply to get through the video.

Edpuzzle is not a niche tool or a gimmick. Ironically, it uses the internet to limit the extent to which students are distracted by the internet. It has the capacity to improve teaching and enhance student learning because it holds students accountable. If you choose to integrate Edpuzzle into your classroom toolkit I am certain that you will find it useful for all the reasons mentioned and also be pleasantly surprised by all the additional features that it offers.

The SAMR Model

How well are you incorporating technology into your students’ learning activities? Use the SAMR Model to find out—or to get started!

A teacher in a Novice level class asks students to partner and talk about a food that they like and why they like it, asking a question in the target language. The SAMR approach shows how technology can go beyond the basic task to more deeply engage students.

**SUBSTITUTION**  When technology is used as a substitute for analog tools that already exist. For example, you have a recorded set of questions that you play in class.

**AUGMENTATION**  When the use of technology enhances the features of a pre-existing tool. For example, you could put the recorded questions online so that students can complete the activity at their own pace. Flexibility is increased, but the basic task is not significantly changed.

**MODIFICATION**  When a task is significantly redesigned using technology. For example, you could use an online tool like Flipgrid, so that students can both see and hear you ask the question via a recorded video and then record their own video answer to the Flipgrid page. In addition to a deeper sense of interaction, students can also preview their answers and rerecord them if they are not satisfied with their work, and you can personalize feedback.

**REDEFINITION**  When new tasks requiring technology are used to engage students more deeply. For example, use Flipgrid and also ask students to watch their classmates’ video answers and provide their own text or video responses. This extends, deepens, and even transforms the task by engaging not only with the instructor but also with classmates and potentially with written interpersonal communication and spoken communication. These tasks are more complex and interactive than is easily accomplished without technology.

The SAMR Model was created by Dr. Ruben Puenteudura, as reported in Education Week ([tinyurl.com/yxvmu468](http://tinyurl.com/yxvmu468))